



Offices of Representative Courtney Neron & Senator Deb Patterson

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Senate Republican Government Shutdown Blocks Legislation Removing Toxins from Children's Products

Oregon falls behind other states in toxins regulations

SALEM, Ore - On Thursday, Representative Courtney Neron (D-Wilsonville) and Senator Deb Patterson (D-Salem) criticized Republican Senators for refusing to show up to vote on HB 3043, the Toxic Free Kids Modernization Act, a bipartisan bill that would remove dangerous chemicals from children's products. This legislation would protect children's health and safety.

As the Senate Republican walkout stretches to its fifth week, many bills, including environmental and children's health bills remain bottlenecked, while the rest of the nation moves forward in passing consumer health laws. HB 3043 passed unanimously in the House Climate, Energy and Environment Committee, and the Senate Energy and Environment Committee. The bill passed the House with bipartisan support. The bill is waiting for a Senate vote and cannot pass until at least one Republican comes back to work.

"As a teacher, legislator, mother, and an everyday Oregonian I care deeply about what is in our kid's products. While I am so disappointed that Republican Senators have once again walked off the job and prevented me from representing my constituents, I am hopeful that at least one more will come back to help us protect the health of Oregon children by keeping toxins out of their toys. HB 3043 is critical work that is poised to pass," said Representative Neron.

"Children are much more vulnerable than adults to negative health impacts from toxic exposure. Infants and toddlers are especially at risk because they frequently place toys and other objects in their mouths," said Senator Patterson. "HB 3043 would expand the ability of OHA to remove chemicals that cause short and long term health impacts including various types of cancer, neurological disorders, nervous system effects, and developmental delays."

Representative Neron introduced HB 3043 to eliminate the limit on how many chemicals can be prioritized for removal from children's products and allows the Oregon Health Authority (OHA)

to ban classes of chemicals to prevent companies from replacing toxins with other similarly dangerous chemicals.

As Chair of the Senate Healthcare Committee, Senator Patterson has been a champion for HB 3043 and was planning to carry the bill when it receives final consideration on the Senate floor.

This bill builds on previous legislation passed in 2015, SB 478, which established the Toxic Free Kids program through the Oregon Health Authority. Since the program was implemented, 4,000 reports have been filed, disclosing things like arsenic, lead, and formaldehyde in kid's products. Since 2015, new scientific developments and community needs justify the policy changes that HB 3043 calls for, to further phase out the use of many of these harmful chemicals.

Simultaneously, states across the nation have been taking critical actions to address toxic chemicals in products. In the last two weeks, Washington passed the [nation's strongest law](#) safeguarding against chemicals in cosmetics, and their Department of Ecology just took [comprehensive action](#) to address chemicals in textiles, personal care products, vinyl flooring, and laundry detergent. Minnesota just banned the [nation's most comprehensive law addressing PFAS as a class](#) in various consumer products like dental floss, textiles, cookware, and cleaning supplies.

HB 3043 is currently sitting on the third reading list, awaiting final consideration by the Senate at the time of this press release.

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